

**NEW JERSEY**  
**BEST PRACTICES**  
**2002-2003 APPLICATION**

**Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.**

**Application Requirements:**

1. **RESPONSES** to the information and the statements below must be **ANONYMOUS** and **ACCURATE**. No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in responding to the statements
2. **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM** on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4. **Do not** include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
3. Applications must be typed on 8 " x 11" white paper, portrait format. Twelve-point or larger computer font or fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font must be used. This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.
4. Keyboarded responses to all the statements below must be no more than a total of four pages. Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response. Format your response for clarity.
5. The information on page 4 and the responses to statements must be copied on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) must be copied on one side of the page. Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
6. The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.
7. The original and seven copies of the application must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by December 15, 2002, with the Itemized List of District Applications form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
<b>Type of School</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<b>Grade Levels</b> <u>4/5/Preschool</u>	<b>Practice Name</b> <u>P.A.W.S. (Positive Assistance Wins Success)</u> <b>Number of Schools with Practice</b> <u>1</u> <b>Number of Districts with Practice</b> <u>1</u> <b>Location</b> <u>Urban/City</u> <u>Suburban</u> With Urban Characteristics <u>Suburban</u> <u>Small City/Town</u> <u>Rural</u>

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arts (Visual and Performing Arts) <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment/Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship/Character Education <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and Equity Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Support Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Gifted and Talented Programs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidance and Counseling Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education <input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment <input type="checkbox"/> School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education <input type="checkbox"/> World Languages/Bilingual Education

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.
2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards*, including the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*,\* addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.
3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.
4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

\*The 2002 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.

**1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.**

P.A.W.S. (**P**ositive **A**ssistance **W**ins **S**uccess) is an interactive program designed to reach out to students who are having difficulty learning by using Dewey, a Shetland Sheepdog. Dewey is certified by the American Kennel Club for obedience training and is registered with The Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dog Association in Morris Plains, NJ. In order to achieve these credentials, Dewey attended classes for training and passed specific tests upon their conclusion. He provides the opportunity for students to learn by experience and to become self motivated learners. Dewey is used in many and varied settings such as:

\*GENERAL EDUCATION: Dewey provides an eager audience for reluctant readers in a simulated "Micro Village" setting where he works in the village library.

\*SPECIAL EDUCATION: Dewey provides motivation for special education students to complete their assignments. "Dewey time" is cherished by these students.

\*PRESCHOOL HANDICAPPED PROGRAM: Dewey provides positive exposure to animals for those children who are fearful. Dewey provides sensory experiences and contact for deprived children. Dewey provides motivation for children with low affect to become more expressive and to show their emotions.

\*COUNSELING: Dewey assists in counseling situations by prompting conversation and personal involvement. Dewey provides students from dysfunctional families with the opportunity to practice appropriate models of caring and humane animal treatment. Dewey has provided a selectively mute child the opportunity to engage in voluntary conversation through the learning and administration of basic obedience commands.

\*SPEECH THERAPY: Dewey acts as a catalyst for language development and a focal point for student attention by stimulating language development. Dewey enabled an autistic child to use complete sentences and engage in eye contact.

The objectives of this program are as follows:

1. To provide motivation for students to initiate conversation in counseling sessions.
2. To use the dog as a catalyst for language development.
3. To assist students with increased focus and attention.
4. To provide a real audience for student oral reading.
5. To provide preschool handicapped children with authentic experience in animal handling.
6. To provide a calming influence in self-contained and resource room classes.
7. To nurture the humane treatment of animals and humans by providing experiential models.

This practice is innovative because few schools allow animals to be used in this manner as a motivator for learning, counseling and human interaction. Dewey has become an integral member of this school's family. Using a dog in this way provides incentive for high student achievement. Students are eager to interact with him as much as possible, thereby encouraging active participation in all of the learning activities associated with him.

**2. List the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standards. Provide an example to substantiate your response.**

**CROSS CONTENT WORKPLACE READINESS STANDARDS:**

- 4. All students will demonstrate self management skills When involved in our guidance counseling program, Dewey provides opportunities for motivational, educational and/or recreational benefits that are necessary to develop habits of success (e.g. positive attitude, assertiveness and responsibility)
- 5. All students will apply safety principles Whenever and wherever Dewey is involved with students, the safe and humane handling of animals is of paramount importance. Students learn how to safely interact with him and may transfer this knowledge to other animals in their experience.

**LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY:**

3.1 (Reading) All students will understand and apply the knowledge of sounds, letters and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers, and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension. In the various classroom settings where Dewey is involved, he provides students with the motivation to choose reading materials to share with him. Reluctant readers are more willing to prepare and read all kinds of material. His nonjudgmental attitude makes Dewey an excellent audience for children hesitant to read.

3.3 (Speaking) All students will speak in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes. During speech therapy sessions, Dewey promotes spontaneous speech from children who are language delayed. Through him, they learn how to express themselves for a variety of purposes. Vocabulary, sentence structure and articulation all come into play when working with Dewey in class.

4.3 (Listening) All students will listen actively to information from a variety of sources in a variety of situations. In all situations where Dewey is involved, the children must practice attentive listening skills in order to positively interact with him. Students process auditory information concerning Dewey and must attend to verbal cues.

**SCIENCE:**

5.5 (Characteristics of Life) All students will gain an understanding of the structure, characteristics, and basic needs of organisms and will investigate the diversity of life. Involvement with Dewey naturally leads to a better understanding of the needs and wants of a domestic animal. Children learn to humanely care for him while in his presence and become more knowledgeable about dogs and pets in general.

**3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.**

Our school houses approximately 450 students in the fourth, fifth and preschool handicapped classes. 20 % of the students receive Special Education Services, 10 % attend the Academic Skills Improvement Program and 15% participate in our Guidance Counseling Program on a regular basis. The diverse population and specific needs of our children necessitates not only academic learning, but also behavioral and affective learning as well. Academic success is greatly affected by student behavior and emotional outlook towards their education. At our school, Dewey serves as an additional teaching tool, expanding the boundaries of our classroom walls. He is a source of unique experiential learning whenever the students reach out to pet him or handle his leash or brush. We find that this experience has only carried over into more positive academic and developmental progress. Students take the good feelings with them as they then reach for the more traditional book and pencil to continue their education.

#### **ASSESSMENT/DATA**

The nature of this practice calls for a more quantitative assessment.

In the areas of Special Education and Speech Therapy, the goals of the practice fell in line with the Individual Education Plans of the students involved with Dewey. Specific objectives in relation to language development are the focus of the speech therapist. All objectives have shown at least a 50% increase in skills, such as vocabulary development, articulation, establishing eye contact with those spoken to, and verbal sentence development.

In the Regular Class setting, students were given the opportunity to practice oral reading skills. Reluctant readers became much more eager to choose a story, sit with Dewey and read to this willing audience, without hesitancy. Significant student oral reading improvement was documented within the language arts assessment procedures for all students who read to Dewey.

The Guidance and Counseling Program assessed each of the strategies implemented to achieve our objectives and thereby measured the accomplishment of our overall goal (i.e. To utilize animal assisted counseling techniques and guidance activities to enhance the provision of an effective school counseling program for students. Following classroom sessions, positive feedback was evident from teachers responding to questions addressing student motivation and attitudes. Over 95% of student participation was noted in activities to promote school spirit. Based upon teacher observation of each referred student's academic performance, peer relationships and/or maturity (coping skills) counseling needs were identified. Using this initial referral and follow-up forms completed by teachers, progress was noted for all students in one or more of the subcategory of the domain identified (e.g. Academic Domain: organization, listening, etc., Relationship domain: cooperation in groups, respecting others, etc., Maturity Domain: accepting responsibility, expressing feelings, etc.). All students in the program demonstrated the ability to implement each counseling skill presented. This was identified via role playing exercises, journal writing and/or completing skill oriented tasks during sessions. There was significant improvement in student perceptions of counseling progress as indicated on student self-assessment indicators.

**4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.**

The initial goal would be to find a trained therapy dog in the local school area. Handlers of registered therapy dogs can be found in almost every community. Make use of newsletters and local newspapers to seek out possible participants. There are a number of therapy dog associations in New Jersey: The Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dogs Inc. in Morris Plains and Therapy Dogs International in Flanders are excellent resources. Registered therapy dogs such as Dewey, have been through numerous training classes. They must pass the American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen Test and then be further tested and certified to be a registered therapy dog by the therapy dog organization. This training includes obedience training and temperament evaluation of the dog, as well as proper handling by the person bringing the dog into the therapy situation. Registered therapy dogs come with good credentials that will ensure good behavior, proper vaccinations and health records and insurance. Therapy dog owners are always looking for ways in which to involve their animal with people who could benefit from exposure and experience with a loving animal. Once a dog and owner have been located, the actual school plan can be set up and put into action.

1. Identify the need. Are there students in your building who would benefit for emotional, academic or developmental reasons?
2. Set up a base station through the Guidance Office or any other location to facilitate scheduling.
3. Develop a school wide orientation program so that all will know the animal's purpose in the building. Our guidance counselor visits each class at the start of the year and introduces the children to Dewey. Children will need to know that the dog is there to "work." Dewey wears a bandana on the job which tells our children that he cannot stop to greet them. Students know that they must ask permission before petting him in hallways, so that he does not disrupt the movement in the building.
4. Contact parents of children in specific programs and obtain written permission for their children to participate. Allergies and phobias must be identified and taken into consideration.
5. Create a main or health office file containing the current vaccination/health records and training certification.
6. Develop your schedule and make the dog as much a part of your school family as possible. Dewey comes to school on the average of 2 days each week. Dewey attends open house nights with parents, goes to assemblies and greets everyone in the hall in the morning.